

MIKE THOMPSON

5TH DISTRICT, CALIFORNIA

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

CHAIRMAN

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH



CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES  
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April 6, 2020

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Chairman  
House Armed Services Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Ranking Member  
House Armed Services Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Smith and Ranking Member Thornberry:

I am writing regarding Captain Brett Crozier, a native of my District, who has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to the health, safety, and wellbeing of the sailors of the USS Theodore Roosevelt. Captain Crozier acted in the best interest of his crew. I am deeply concerned that his dismissal was decided before the completion of a thorough investigation.

I've read Captain Crozier's letter that appeared in the San Francisco Chronicle on Tuesday, March 31. The letter does not convey the unsubstantiated concerns of an alarmist. The sailors aboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt faced an unprecedented health crisis and Captain Crozier plainly set forth common sense recommendations to ensure the safety of his crew and maintain its capacity to execute the national security mission in a region with complex threats. These recommendations clearly adhere to the guidelines issued by the Center for Disease Control to treat, contain, and prevent the spread of COVID-19. In addition, Captain Crozier's actions align with Secretary of Defense Esper's guidance that protecting people is the top priority. In remarks from March 24, Secretary Esper urged his commanders and senior enlisted personnel to "do the right thing, particular to your unit" to "protect your people, while at the same time maintaining mission readiness."

Captain Crozier prioritized the greatest asset of the Department of Defense – the women and men of the Armed Forces. I request your Committee's support for an open, transparent, and complete investigation into the crisis onboard the USS Theodore Roosevelt. On behalf of the sailors of the USS TR and their families and loved ones, I respectfully request the Committee conduct oversight of the Department of Navy's investigation into the circumstances that led to Captain Crozier's dismissal. Firing the messenger who raised the alarm shows a worrisome lack of judgment. Captain Crozier and the sailors of the USS Theodore Roosevelt deserve better.

Sincerely,

MIKE THOMPSON  
Member of Congress